CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 8 August 1996, at 10.00 a.m.

President: Mr. Urrutia (Peru)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 744th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

On my list of speakers for today I have the distinguished representatives of Ukraine, Ireland, Morocco, Egypt, Mexico and South Africa.

I now call on the distinguished representative of Ukraine, Mr. Shamshur.

Mr. SHAMSHUR (Ukraine): Since this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor during this part of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency and skilful discharge of your responsible functions at the critical stage of the NTB negotiations when so much is at stake with a view to achieving the noble goal of relieving the world of the perilous burden of nuclear explosions - be they conducted for military or allegedly peaceful purposes.

Following the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, I have the honour to inform the Conference on Disarmament of the decision of the Government of Ukraine to endorse the draft comprehensive test-ban treaty as contained in document CD/NTB/WP.330/Rev.1.

This decision has been preceded by a careful examination of the aforementioned text. Although we, as many in this hall, regret the fact that some relevant proposals, including those either put forward or supported by Ukraine, are missing from the draft treaty, we believe that it represents a sound compromise taking into account the positions expressed by the different parties to the negotiations and thus striking a realistic balance between desirable and currently attainable objectives.

In our opinion, further procrastination in the process of negotiations would seriously jeopardize the chances for the successful completion of our common work on the CTBT before the start of the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. Let me take this opportunity to pledge my delegation's full support to Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands in his efforts to remove the obstacles remaining in the way of final agreement.

It should be also noted that completion of the CTBT bears special importance for the effective functioning of this body in future, because it could create new opportunities for more productive and intensive negotiations on such issues, as "cut-off", security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and determining the appropriate CD format for addressing the wider topic of nuclear disarmament, which we consider to be amongst disarmament priorities.

A definitively positive message on the CTBT from the Palais des Nations is awaited with impatience by too many in this world. We cannot allow these hopes to be frustrated.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Ukraine for his statement and for his kind words. I now call on the distinguished representative of Ireland, Ambassador Anderson.

Ms. ANDERSON (Ireland): Mr. President, let me first convey to you my warm personal good wishes. You have a very important role at a very important time.

Speaking in my national capacity and as representative of the presidency in office of the Council of the European Union, I would like to inform the Conference of a declaration by the presidency on behalf of the European Union which was issued yesterday in Dublin and Brussels. The EFTA countries members of the EEA, the central and east European countries associated with the European Union, and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, have aligned themselves with this declaration.

The text of the declaration is as follows:

"The European Union expresses its support for the earliest possible transmission by the Conference on Disarmament of a draft comprehensive test-ban treaty to the United Nations General Assembly.

The declaration of the European Union on 22 April stated as follows: 'The European Union attaches the highest priority and is strongly committed to the conclusion, before the end of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament, of the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty which will prohibit any nuclear-weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, so as to enable its signature by autumn, at the outset of the fifty-first United Nations General Assembly'.

While the spring session concluded without formally adopting the treaty, there is still time to meet the objective of the signature of this Treaty at the outset of the fifty-first United Nations General Assembly. The European Union remains fully committed to this objective.

However, if this historic opportunity is to be grasped, the text must be forwarded for adoption without delay.

On 28 June, at the close of the spring session of the Conference, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, presented a draft integrated treaty text. He has made clear that this text represents, in his judgement, the maximum common ground between the negotiators. Nothing that has happened since the resumption of the current session of the Conference on Disarmament would suggest a different judgement. The European Union believes that the 28 June text must command respect for its determined effort to accommodate, to the greatest extent possible, views which have not been easy to reconcile.

Because the current text attempts to balance competing requirements, it does not and cannot reflect all the aspirations of all participants in the negotiations. European Union members are not fully satisfied with the treatment of some of the key issues in the draft

(Ms. Anderson, Ireland)

treaty. Like others, however, the European Union feels that a spirit of compromise must prevail at this late stage. Too much is at stake for us to risk failure of this endeavour.

The European Union continues to believe that the conclusion of this treaty will be a concrete step in the full realization and effective implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It will contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to the process of nuclear disarmament and therefore to the enhancement of international peace and security.

The European Union therefore urges all countries that have participated in the negotiations to accept and adopt the treaty text so as to meet the objective of signature at the outset of the fifty-first United Nations General Assembly."

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Anderson for her statement and for her kind words. I now call on the distinguished representative of Morocco, Ambassador Benjeloun-Touimi.

Mr. BENJELOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco) (translated from French): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to wish you every success in the discharge of your duties. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan, for his devotion to the great cause of disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament has reached a crucial stage in its history because within a few days we absolutely must conclude negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. These negotiations have been lengthy and difficult. Their outcome is clearly unsatisfactory to some delegations which have actively participated in them, while others, on the contrary, have said that they can support the draft treaty presented by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands, on 28 June.

The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco has always said that it earnestly hoped the negotiations would result in a satisfactory compromise and has always participated in them in that spirit. Two delegations, those of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Australia, showed the various possible ways of reaching a compromise acceptable to all and we responded to their efforts with interest and encouragement. Over the course of the lengthy negotiations, consultations and exchanges of views, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and the participating delegations have spared no effort. Faced with substantial differences of opinion, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, the chairmen of the working groups and Friends of the Chair have - and we are very grateful to them for that - striven even harder and more resourcefully to narrow the gaps, iron out the difficulties and, to the extent possible, reach satisfactory solutions.

In sum, the text presented by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on 28 June is not ideal, but it is the result of three long years of negotiations. It may not meet all of our expectations, but it is a step, one more step towards disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. It is not

(Mr. Benjeloun-Touimi, Morocco)

the decisive advance that we would have all wanted to make, but it does, for all that, represent a useful and necessary further stage in the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Moroccan delegation is not opposed in principle to the Chairman's text in document CD/NTB/WP.330/Rev.1, but it understands the points raised by some delegations which consider that the draft treaty does not meet certain of their national concerns.

The Moroccan delegation is a firm supporter of the sovereign right of every State to accede or not to accede to a treaty. No one can deny this fundamental right, which falls within no domain but that of State sovereignty. My delegation considers this to be an issue of principle and of respect for the fundamental rules of public international law. Nevertheless, my delegation remains convinced that a compromise is within reach and that it is necessary both to be attentive to the legitimate concerns of all the delegations members of the Conference and the others and to show the flexibility necessary to conclude as soon as possible. We remain willing to contribute to the extent possible to the search for a speedy solution.

It is essential that these negotiations be successful so that the treaty can be transmitted for signature at the opening of the next session of the United Nations General Assembly. The expectations of the international community are real and we cannot disappoint them. The credibility of the Conference is at stake. I remain convinced that, therefore, the spirit of conciliation and flexibility will triumph over pessimism and resignation and that we will succeed in our noble undertaking.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Morocco for his statement and for his kind words. I now call on the distinguished representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt): First of all, I wanted to express to you, Sir, our satisfaction for the manner in which you are conducting the work of the Conference on Disarmament at this very critical period of the Conference's session and I wish you every success and pledge to you my delegation's full support.

I have asked for the floor today on behalf of 28 delegations members of the Conference on Disarmament in order to table a document containing a "programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons". The position of the co-sponsors of the document with respect to the question of nuclear disarmament, and with respect to the utmost priority which must be attributed to this issue within the Conference on Disarmament is well known and does not need further elaboration. Let me only remind delegations of the draft decision put forward by the Group of 21 before the CD on 14 March 1996 (CD/1388) on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Disarmament "to commence negotiations on a phased programme for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time" as requested by General Assembly resolution 50/70 P. Let me also recall the declaration of the Group of 21 before the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on 28 March 1996, where the Group of 21 yet again pressed for the commencement of negotiations in the CD on nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

The issue of nuclear disarmament is one which must remain at the forefront of the international disarmament agenda until we are able to rid our planet of the nuclear threat thereby turning it into a "nuclear-weapon-free world". The proposed programme of action recognizes that there is a requirement for active multilateral efforts to identify, negotiate and implement specific, step-by-step measures for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It contains concrete proposals for concrete measures to be carried out by the Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Disarmament in three phases, the last of which takes us to the year 2020. The list of measures proposed is not exhaustive, but it is understood that in any programme for nuclear disarmament all measures to be taken are inextricably bound to one another.

It is the sincere wish of the co-sponsors of the "programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons" that all members and non-members of the Conference on Disarmament will carefully study the programme and start to work immediately for the earliest realization of the objective of attaining a world free from all nuclear weapons. I have already requested the CD secretariat to issue the "programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons" as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Egypt for his statement and for his kind words. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador de Icaza.

Mr. de ICAZA (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): The delegation of Mexico is among the 28 delegations that have co-sponsored the programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons that the representative of Egypt, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Group of 21, has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament. Our co-sponsorship will come as a surprise to no one. We have been participating actively in this forum since its creation 34 years ago. Our positions have been to the fore and we have attained concrete results, amongst which I would like to refer to the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1967, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area. This isn't the first time for us to submit a programme: in 1979 we presented a draft comprehensive programme for disarmament; in 1982 we launched a world disarmament campaign, and in 1993 we proposed to the General Assembly a programme for the progressive reduction of the nuclear threat. In 1978, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, we said that the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests by all States in the context of an effective process of nuclear disarmament would be to the benefit of all humanity. Today, on the verge of the conclusion of the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, my delegation feels it timely and even necessary to supplement that treaty with a phased programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons within a definite time-frame. The Conference on Disarmament should begin negotiations on this as soon as we complete the CTBT.

There could not be a more propitious moment. The intense competition to produce nuclear warheads and deploy systems of those weapons that typified the cold war has ended. The level of alert of some systems has been lowered, some types of weapons have been eliminated and there have been agreements and negotiations for the reduction of stockpiles. There has, however, been no

fundamental change in the military doctrines of security based on these doomsday weapons and the threat that the mere existence of nuclear weapons represents for the human race still hangs over the future of our planet. Therefore, it is urgent and, I repeat, essential to give the negotiations on disarmament a direction and specific goals. We are certainly not trying to impose any preconceived patterns. On the contrary, we are proposing and calling for a joint exercise in thinking that will enable us in the span of one generation, if not sooner, to consolidate a world free of nuclear weapons. The programme envisages measures to eliminate the nuclear threat, concrete measures of nuclear disarmament, measures to reduce arsenals and promote confidence between States, and measures to consolidate a nuclear-weapon-free world. Among measures to which participants' attention might be drawn is that relating to the cessation of all nuclear tests and the closure of the sites where they take place. Naturally, this is not a matter of renegotiating a treaty that prohibits testing by means of nuclear explosions, but rather of remedying, in the future, one of the defects of the treaty that we are about to conclude and that we hope will be adopted promptly and will come into effect as soon as possible.

My delegation joins the 28 others that are offering this programme as a contribution to the Conference on Disarmament for orderly and systematic consideration of the subject of nuclear disarmament and in due course will ask this forum to transmit this programme to the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Mexico for his statement. I now call on the distinguished representative of South Africa, Ambassador Selebi.

Mr. SELEBI (South Africa): Allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. As President of the Conference it will be your task to lead us in our work at this critical stage in our endeavour to achieve the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT). Please be assured of my delegation's full support.

I wish to take this opportunity to inform the Conference of a joint New Zealand/South Africa communiqué which was signed this morning on the occasion of the meeting between Prime Minister James Bolger and President Nelson Mandela in Cape Town. The section in the communiqué on "disarmament and arms control", which is incorporated in a Memorandum of Cooperation, reads as follows, and I quote:

"Memorandum of Cooperation on Disarmament and Arms Control

On behalf of our Governments and people we reaffirm the strong commitment of South Africa and New Zealand to achieving a world free of all weapons of mass destruction. We are pleased at the close cooperation between our two countries in the various international disarmament and non-proliferation fora, which will increase now that we are both full members of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Selebi, South Africa)

We also reaffirm that, following the conclusion of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT) text through multilateral negotiations, our Governments intend to sign the treaty at the earliest opportunity. Our delegations to the Conference on Disarmament will work actively to support the Chairman of the negotiating committee in his endeavour to resolve the difficulties which the Conference is presently considering with regard to the Treaty. We call on all other countries to give their prompt support to the Treaty. Looking ahead, we confirm that our Governments will work for the commencement next year of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Further steps are needed in the programme to bring the world closer to the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons. We note that the parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have committed themselves to that goal, a commitment which was explicitly recognized in the recent Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. In that context, the process of reviewing the NPT which commences next year provides a means for promoting the full implementation of the Treaty and the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament which were agreed at the time of the indefinite extension of the Treaty in May 1995.

We welcome the opening for signature on 11 April 1996 of the Pelindaba Treaty creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and agree that it represents a milestone for the African continent. In the Pacific region, the end of nuclear testing had been marked by the signature of the protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga by France, the United Kingdom and the United States. We affirm the objective of achieving a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons. Our Governments will work together with other like-minded countries with a view to developing increased cooperation between existing or prospective nuclear-weapon-free zones, which with the addition of Antarctica cover more than 50 per cent of the Earth's landmass.

As States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), South Africa and New Zealand reaffirm our Governments' full support for the Convention. We call on the United States and the Russian Federation, as the major declared possessors of chemical weapons, as well as other States, to ratify the Convention at the earliest opportunity. In addition, we look forward to the imminent sixty-fifth ratification, which will trigger entry into force and implementation of the Convention.

The Governments of South Africa and New Zealand also reaffirm our commitment towards strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) by establishing a verifiable compliance regime for the Convention. To this end, our Governments will work together with other like-minded countries with a view to concluding successfully the ongoing negotiations in the BWC ad hoc group.

(Mr. Selebi, South Africa)

We share the international community's concern at the build-up of conventional weapons beyond the legitimate requirements of self-defence. To this end, we welcome the achievement of the Guidelines for International Arms Transfers which was agreed to at the 1996 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We also call for a greater focus on conventional arms in all disarmament fora. All of the Member States of the United Nations are also encouraged to actively participate in and support the United Nations Arms Register. In view of the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel landmines to civilians, we call for the worldwide elimination of anti-personnel landmines. In alleviating this suffering, we are committed to reinforcing international cooperation for mine-clearance and the development of national capacities for mine clearance in mine-infested countries. We also support the development of effective demining and landmine detection capabilities.

We will continue to cooperate in various international arrangements dedicated to the non-proliferation of dual-use equipment and technologies which could be used in the development of weapons of mass destruction, and in discouraging any destabilizing build-up of conventional weapons.

Given the many interests our two Governments and peoples share in this area, we agree that periodic consultations should take place between our Governments on issues relating to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction."

In conclusion I also wish to take this opportunity of informing the Conference on Disarmament that the South African Government has decided to make a contribution to the start-up costs of the Preparatory Committee for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The necessary funds for this purpose have already been set aside.

Before giving up the floor, I would like to use this opportunity to raise one further issue. I would like to address the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt which was made on behalf of a number of members of the Conference on Disarmament regarding a "programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons".

We have studied the contents of the programme carefully. We, however, found ourselves unable to co-sponsor the working paper because of the linkage which it introduces between the immediate "and concurrent" commencement of negotiations and early conclusion of: a multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; a convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons; and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. I clearly stated South Africa's principled position on the linkages issue when I addressed the Conference on 25 January 1996. At that time I stated that: "My delegation also believes it would be beneficial to our work if we approached our discussions on the agenda this year without relying on so-called linkages. Ever since they were raised at the end of 1994, linkages have led to a

disappointing lack of progress on issues which the Conference should address. Linkages are no doubt a neat way of avoiding progress on certain subjects, or of trying to ensure progress on others, but the result has instead been mostly to block progress on all fronts."

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of South Africa for his statement and for his kind words. I now call on the distinguished representative of India, Ambassador Ghose.

Ms. GHOSE (India): Sir, may I first of all convey to you our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We are convinced that your dedication and wisdom will be a great asset in guiding the work of the Conference at this stage. May I also take the opportunity to convey our appreciation to Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan for the skill with which he presided over the Conference before you.

I am instructed to read to the CD an extract from the statement made by the Minister of External Affairs of India, Mr. I.K. Gujral, to both Houses of the Indian Parliament on 31 July 1996. I quote

> "India has taken a consistent and principled position on nuclear disarmament. This is why, since 1954, when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for a ban on nuclear-weapon tests, we have urged that the CTBT must be seen as a first step on the road to nuclear disarmament. The approach taken by India in the CTBT negotiations therefore calls for a genuinely comprehensive CTBT with a view to ending future development of nuclear weapons and placing the CTBT in the framework of a step-by-step process of nuclear disarmament leading to the elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. Ongoing testing programmes, whether at test sites or in laboratories, are clear indications that the nuclear-weapon States are not willing to give up their reliance on their nuclear arsenals and consider CTBT merely as a non-proliferation measure.
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> Such testing programmes inevitably give rise to questions relating to India's national security. While we have adopted the policy of restraint after demonstrating our capability, we remain fully conscious of the evolving security situation. We are committed to taking all steps necessary to enable us to cope with any threat that may be posed to the security of India."

On 28 June we received a text of a draft CTBT from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Ramaker. My Government gave this text, contained in CD/NTB/WP.330/Rev.1, its most careful and detailed consideration. We examined if this treaty was the treaty which we had been mandated to negotiate by the CD and for which India had entered the negotiations two and a half years ago, participating in them constructively and with seriousness. It was with disappointment and regret that we noted that this text is not very different from the earlier working paper of the Chairman which had led us to state on 20 June that we could not sign the

treaty in that form. This text, while it does contain a treaty, does not contain the comprehensive test-ban treaty we had been mandated to negotiate, nor does it meet India's basic concerns. Therefore, our position as stated on 20 June not to sign this treaty in this form stands.

The present text not only ignores our substantive objections but also contains an article, article XIV, to which we have the strongest objections. The article, as it is presently drafted, not only totally disregards the fact that we have stated that we will not sign this treaty today, tomorrow or in three years' time, but seeks to enforce our signature by means unprecedented in treaty-negotiating practice in that it creates obligations for a country without its consent and therefore runs contrary to customary international law. We understand that this formula is not in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the delegations, who have but reluctantly accepted it, but has been retained because of the rigid positions adopted by a small number of delegations. Clearly, those who support this formula do not wish, for their own reasons, this treaty to come into force - ever. With a view to correcting this unacceptable situation, I had proposed an amendment to article XIV in the Ad Hoc Committee which would follow the precedent of the Chemical Weapons Convention. This proposed amendment reads:

> "This Treaty shall enter into force 180 days after the date of the deposit of the instruments of ratification by 65 States and no less than two years after its opening for signature."

I sincerely hope that it would be possible for the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban to accept a modification to the present text of article XIV. If, however, the present text is sought to be retained, I am instructed to inform the Conference that India would be reluctantly obliged to oppose such efforts. While we do not wish to prevent other countries from exercising their sovereign right to adopt a treaty to which they wish to accede, we cannot have our sovereign right not to sign the treaty taken away and accept obligations on India that we cannot and will not accept.

My delegation would commend to the members of the CD the amendment proposed by us to article XIV to enable a just and fair solution to one of the problems currently facing the Ad Hoc Committee.

India's commitment to global nuclear disarmament remains unchanged and undiminished. We will continue to work with like-minded countries towards that end. We have therefore, together with 28 other countries of the Group of 21 supported the phased programme for nuclear disarmament presented by the Coordinator of the Group of 21 today. It is a statement of our belief that work on a treaty on the total elimination of nuclear weapons must start urgently even more so in the present circumstances.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of India for her statement and for her kinds words. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador de Icaza.

Mr. de ICAZA (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): I do apologize for taking the floor a second time and taking it again to speak on the programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The position of the delegation of Mexico with regard to linkages is well known. Last year, when I had the honour of presiding over this Conference, I informed the Conference at the end of my term of office of my frustration over linkages and my opposition to them. This position will be found in the records of the meeting. My delegation does not think that there are express linkages in the outline for a programme of nuclear disarmament that it has co-sponsored. I could even say, since it fell to me to coordinate the consultations between delegations on this matter, that throughout the programme we have come up with consensus solutions respecting the positions of all the co-sponsoring delegations. If there had been in the programme linkages regarding institutional arrangements in the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation would not have been able to co-sponsor it. We are co-sponsoring it because we believe that there are none.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Mexico for his statement. I have no further speakers on my list for this morning. Would any delegation like to take the floor? The delegation of Seychelles has the floor.

Mr. ISEUX (Seychelles): First of all allow me to thank delegations for accepting the Republic of Seychelles to participate as observer in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me also to thank the secretariat for extending such a warm welcome to our delegation.

In my capacity as a new permanent representative of the Republic of Seychelles, allow me also to give an assurance to each and every one that I shall do my best to make the most positive contribution possible to the progress of the Conference and the completion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

I shall deliver the official statement of the Republic of Seychelles, and its reasons for its wish to participate in the Conference, at the next plenary meeting.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the distinguished representative of Seychelles for his statement and take this opportunity to welcome him as his country's representative to the Conference on Disarmament.

Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? Apparently not.

(The President)

At my request, the secretariat has distributed the tentative timetable of meetings for next week. It was drawn up in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and, as usual, is merely indicative and can be changed if necessary. On that understanding, may I take it that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 15 August, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.